CLAIMS

1. A relay unit connecting one or a plurality of manipulation terminals or external storage units to an entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes; said relay unit

carrying out relay processing for the first mode when the entertainment apparatus is operating in the first mode while carrying out relay processing for the second mode when the entertainment apparatus is operating in the second mode.

2. The relay unit according to claim 1, wherein in at least either the case of changing from the first mode to the second mode or changing from the second mode to the first mode, a period in which neither relay processing for the first mode nor relay processing for the second mode is carried out for mode switching is provided.

3. The relay unit according to claim 2, wherein the duration of the period in which neither relay processing for the first mode nor relay processing for the second mode is carried out is defined according to a communication procedure with the entertainment apparatus.

4. The relay unit according to claim 3, wherein the relay unit receives a selection signal corresponding to an operation mode in which the entertainment apparatus operates from the entertainment apparatus, and then carries out either relay processing for the first mode or relay processing for the second mode in conformity with that received selection signal.

5. The relay unit according to claim 4, comprising:

a first relay processing unit for the first mode;

a second relay processing unit for the second mode; and

a control signal generator configured to generate a first control signal to operate the first relay processing unit and a second control signal to operate the second relay processing unit in conformity with the selection signal.

6. The relay unit according to claim 5, wherein the control signal generator comprises a pulse generator configured to generate pulses of a predetermined width when changing from the first mode to the second mode, or from the second mode to the first mode.

7. The relay unit according to any one of claim 1 to claim 6, wherein

the first mode is a normal mode in which normal operation is carried out, and

the second mode is a compatible mode in which different operation from normal operation is carried out, assumed compatibility with other models.

8. An entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes; said entertainment apparatus comprising:

reading information from a recording medium;

determining operation mode based on the read information;

generating an operation mode selection signal in accordance with the determined operation mode; and

outputting the generated selection signal to the outside.

9. A communication system, comprising an entertainment apparatus having at

least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes, and a relay unit connecting the entertainment apparatus and one or a plurality manipulation terminals or external storage units, wherein

the entertainment apparatus transmits to the relay unit a selection signal corresponding to an operation mode; and

the relay unit receives the selection signal, and in conformity with the received selection signal, carries out relay processing for the first mode when the entertainment apparatus is operating in the first mode, and carries out relay processing for the second mode when the entertainment apparatus is operating in the second mode.

10. A communication method for connecting one or a plurality of manipulation terminals or external storage units to an entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes via a relay unit, said communication method comprising:

a step of reading information from a recording medium;

a step of determining an operation mode of the entertainment apparatus based on the read information;

a step of generating a selection signal in accordance with that determination result;

a step of transmitting the selection signal to the relay unit, which are curried by the entertainment apparatus;

a step of receiving the selection signal;

a step of relaying for the first mode when the received selection signal corresponds to a signal for the first mode; and

a step of relaying for he second mode when the received selection signal

corresponds to a signal for the second mode, which are curried by the relay unit.

11. The communication method according to claim 10, wherein the step of determining includes setting operation mode to the first mode when the recording medium is removed, and generating a selection signal corresponding to the first mode.

12. The communication method according to either claim 10 or claim 11, wherein the relay unit has a first relay processing unit for the first mode and a second relay processing unit for the second mode; and said communication method further comprises the step of resetting both the first relay processing unit and the second relay processing unit for a predetermined period, which is carried out by the relay unit, when the selection signal switches from a signal corresponding to the first mode to a signal corresponding to the second mode, or vice versa.

13. The communication method according to claim 10, wherein

the relay unit has a first relay processing unit for the first mode and a second relay processing unit for the second mode, and

the step of determining includes setting operation mode to the first mode when power of the entertainment apparatus is applied, and generating a selection signal corresponding to the first mode, said communication method further comprises the step of resetting both the first relay processing unit and the second relay processing unit for a predetermined period, which is carried out by the relay unit, when power of the entertainment apparatus is applied and a new selection signal corresponding to the first mode is generated.

14. A recording medium stored with a program for operating a computer as an entertainment apparatus having at least a first mode and a second mode as operation modes, said program comprising:

a step of reading information from the recording medium;

a step of determining operation mode based on the read information;

a step of generating an operation mode selection signal in accordance with the determined operation mode; and

a step of outputting the generated selection signal to the outside.